

News-Social Letter ACTION

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SHOP OXNAM SCORES IRRESPONSIBLE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS

Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam's address on "The Church, the University and freedom," delivered in Washington, D. C. on February 24 at the installation of Hurst R. Anderson as the eighth president of American University was a strong call to colleges and universities and the church to defend freedom of thought and speech. A report of the address was widely carried by the national news services, but outside a few metropolitan dailies the content coverage was inadequate. Fortunately the Commission on Public Relations of The Methodist Church released a comprehensive summary of the address which reveals that Bishop Oxnam handled certain congressional investigating Committees and their personnel without gloves. The following paragraphs taken from the Commission's release giving the substance of the Bishop's address are pointed up by Velde's subsequent suggestion that his committee might decide to investigate the churches and call ministers to account. Addressing President Anderson, Bishop Oxnam said:

The free university is essential to a free society, just as a free society is essential to a free university . . . But, Sir, you have come to this position in an era when freedom is not alone in jeopardy in lands where dictators rule and is not alone endangered by the enemy without! There is danger within! . . .

"Wherever there is a conspirator who would overthrow this government,

him be found and, in the American way, punished. There is no difference of opinion among us on that score.

But when men, granted immunity, that privilege to call the General

led our armed forces through the World War a traitor and who now

question the patriotism of the teaching staff of this nation, the time

come to carry the issue to the people for decision. If there be a few

aversives in the teaching staff of this nation, there are proper agencies that deal with that fact . . . Men who

that in every little red school house

there is a little red teacher, lie. I know the teachers of this country, and

we had the privilege of speaking to thousands of them in great

teachers' institutes across the land. There be a more loyal body of people

in the teachers of this republic who, with inadequate income and often

with inadequate facilities, have reared

generation after generation believing

the free way of life, I do not know

'So serious has the threat to our American educational system become that it was necessary for a brave, patriotic and talented woman, a resident of Washington, to address the American Association of School Administrators at Atlantic City last week and to summon the educational leaders of the nation to a counter-attack. Mrs. Frances E. Meyer understands, as all of us must understand, that when any group seeks to determine what to be thought, what books to be read, what procedures are to be followed in the laboratory, that moment freedom passes and dictatorship comes . . . we named the men chiefly responsible.

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WHAT HAPPENED ON RACE RELATIONS SUNDAY?

We cannot of course begin to know all the acts and gestures of goodwill and understanding which were encouraged and sponsored by our churches on Race Relations Sunday, February 8, 1953. However eighty-seven of our churches have already reported on their programs for this day and they give us an interesting glimpse into what goes on across the brotherhood in this field of interracial understanding.

It is significant to begin with that of the replies coming in, thirty-nine were from so-called Southern States as compared to forty-four from the Northern and Western sections of our country. Nine churches in Texas, nine in Missouri, seven in Kentucky, five in Virginia, for example, reported programs that were designed to bring about a better understanding between racial and cultural groups. These figures suggest that our Southern churches are about as interested in and as ready to participate in projects designed to foster better relations between the races as are their Northern sisters.

Also significant is the fact that of the eighty-seven church groups reporting so far only three reported any negative reactions from members of their church and two of these three indicated that the majority sentiment was favorable.

What specifically happened on February 8?

1. Sixty of the eighty-seven churches reporting indicated that the pastor built the morning sermon around the idea of the Christian approach to brotherhood and interracial understanding.
2. Nineteen of the churches reported pulpit exchanges with members of minority groups. (Negro, Jewish, etc.)
3. Eleven churches indicated that they had invited guests of other races into their services as fellow worshippers on this occasion.
4. Five other churches indicated that they had invited and welcomed students of other races into their services.
5. Eleven churches reported exchanges of choirs or of elders and deacons with churches of other racial backgrounds.
6. Nine youth groups invited Negro youth groups to share in their evening programs.
7. There were at least five churches using films or film strips which dealt with brotherhood or race relations.
8. Twenty white churches invited Negro speakers for other meetings (aside from pulpit exchanges).

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INSTITUTES ON RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

Lincoln University, Pa., July 20-24, Eden Seminary, Webster Groves, Mo., August 3-7, Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon, July 13-17. Under auspices of the National Council of Churches. A few scholarships available.

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SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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NATIONAL COUNCIL SPEAKS ON FREEDOM

The following statement on freedom of education and religion was adopted by the General Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA on March 11, 1953 as reported by the *New York Times* on March 12.

"As Christian Americans we are dedicated to maintaining the freedom of all Americans and American institutions. No body of citizens is more alert to the threat of Communist thought and conspiracy both to the Christian faith and to freedom than the Christian churches.

"Free ministers in free pulpits, preaching to free people the liberating truth of Christ, are a chief bulwark of American freedom and the best guarantee of its future. This freedom must be maintained. Certain methods, however, of Congressional committees investigating Communist activities in educational institutions endanger the very freedom which we seek to preserve.

"Congress has the right and duty to make such investigations as may be necessary to secure the information upon which sound legislation may be based. Conspirators in any area of life who seek the violent overthrow of the Government of the United States should be discovered, tried in American tribunals, and where found guilty, punished.

"No witness at any investigation should be denied fair and dignified treatment. Having sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, he should be permitted the right of an uninterrupted initial statement of reasonable length, since unlimited right of cross-examination by all members of the investigating committee is allowed.

"No committee should circulate on its letterheads, over the signature of its members or employees, unsupported charges against individuals or organizations which it has made no effort to investigate or substantiate.

"The proper and essential function of Congressional investigations must be preserved. It must be jealously guarded against abuse through meth-

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WASHINGTON ROUND-UP

→ *The Preachers:* It has been a long long time since Sunday's sermons influenced life in the Capitol as much as they have recently. Four sermons delivered in a week's time chastised the tactics of Congressional committees investigating communism. This brought forth a demand that the clergy itself be scrutinized for any Red sympathies. Chairman Harold Velde (R.Ill.), who made this suggestion, later dropped it when his House Un-American Activities Committee revolted. Backing away from a fight with the preachers also were Rep. Velde's fellow investigators, Senators McCarthy (R.Wis.) and Jenner (R.Ind.). When asked about the idea, Senator McCarthy replied, "You may be sure that my committee will not duplicate Rep. Velde's efforts." The rumpus caused by the sermons and Congressional reaction left the impression that there is a limit to how far the Red probers can go; and that there was one group in the United States that does not cringe at a threat of investigation.

→ *God's Patience:* The Very Rev. Francis B. Sayre, dean of the Washington Cathedral, and grandson of former President Woodrow Wilson, was one of the first to speak out against unfair methods being used by Congressional committees. He said "these men are trying God's patience." Joining Dean Sayre in these sentiments were Dr. A. Powell Davies, Unitarian, and Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, and Dr. C. Stanley Lowell, Methodists. A few weeks earlier Senator McCarthy, a Catholic, was publicly rebuked by "America", a prominent Roman Catholic publication.

→ *Churches:* Rep. Velde's retreat does not end the threat of an investigation of the churches. Such an investigation already has taken place and a House Un-American Activities report issued on the unofficial Methodist Social Action Federation. Other church groups presumably have found their way into the Committee's files. This material could be expanded in the future for an attack on liberal spokesmen in the Protestant churches. It would begin by attempting to link certain well-known church leaders with "communist front" organizations, probably during the 1930's and World War II. Once such an association was established in the public mind concerning a few people, the committees would be in a position to silence their critics. As with other groups, the investigators would work on the premise that anyone brought before such a committee and accused of communist associations, is thereby discredited on the guilt-by-association theory.

→ *Foreign Policy:* The Eisenhower Administration also stiffened its back

somewhat against attacks on the State Department by the GOP investigators in Congress. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles took issue with Senator McCarthy when he ordered career diplomat John Carter Vincent be retired with a full pension. In this action Mr. Dulles removed the stigma of disloyalty placed on Mr. Vincent by Congressional Committees and a loyalty review board. The junior senator from Wisconsin was quick to voice his disapproval of such consideration of a man he had accused of following the communist party line. Mr. Dulles, however, stood his ground and said that if Vincent was guilty of anything, it was poor judgment in reporting on the communist menace in China when he was in the U. S. war-time mission in that country. The Secretary and the Senator also crossed swords on another issue. This involved Senator McCarthy's demand for departmental files on two Voice of America employees. Traditionally, on the advice of the FBI, government agencies have refused such requests on the ground that these files contain largely unevaluated information, including rumors as well as facts. Mr. Dulles refused the Senator's request, but agreed to give him a resume of any important material bearing on his investigation. This change in attitude, after a few weeks of attempting to cooperate with Senator McCarthy would seem to indicate a further strain in relations between the Administration and the Senator over who will determine the foreign policy of the nation.

→ *Capitol Events:* The apparently successful move to grant Florida, Louisiana, and California control of submerged oil lands off their coasts has stimulated similar demands regarding federal lands in 14 states. Congressmen from states containing public lands are expected to introduce legislation asking that U. S. property be turned over to the states for development by private groups. These lands originally were set aside as a conservation move, some of them by Theodore Roosevelt . . . Federal public housing projects, including slum clearance, are about to give way to a demand by real estate men that private industry be permitted to do the nation's housing job. Appointment of former Rep. Cole (R. Kans.) as Housing and Home Finance Administrator, is considered the tipoff on the Administration's determination to restrict both the public building and financing of low cost homes. While in Congress, Mr. Cole was an unrelenting foe of public housing . . . Action on extension of the social security program apparently will be postponed until the next session of Congress.

ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

ans of the Times. Citizens of Indianapolis, Indiana rubbed their eyes recently when it was announced that Indianapolis hospitals, including the city-owned General Hospital, Methodist Hospital, St. Francis and St. Vincentian Catholic hospitals, and Norris Foundation Hospital would henceforth accept patients without regard to race or color. The group of hospitals constituting Indiana University Medical Center has long been nonsegregated. Two years ago a citizens committee unsuccessfully to abolish segregation in the General Hospital and to secure admission of Negroes to private hospitals in the city. It seems that the situation which broke the segregation barrier was the coolness of Negro leaders to invitations to participate in a million campaign for a new hospital and enlargement of existing facilities so long as their own people were denied from hospital care.

Jesuit Leaves the Church. Dr. Jose M. Mateo, one of the outstanding leaders of the Spanish Jesuit order had received from the pope a written benediction and had only recently assumed a bishopric, has left the church, according to an announcement from Christ's Mission, Inc., 160 Fifth Avenue, New York, publisher of the magazine *The Converted Catholic*. Dr. Mateo has written a book describing his break with the Spanish Church and setting forth the reasons for his change of faith.

Local Church Does Something About It. Members of the West Point Christian Church, Russiaville, Indiana decided to do something besides wringing their hands over the sort of radio and television programs they and their children were compelled to listen to. The church issued a formal statement setting forth the objection of its members to the types of radio and TV shows offered and made constructive suggestions for improvement. The principal objection was to beer advertising and depicting of drinking scenes. If the radio and television industry is wise it will give heed to such protests.

Gambling For Religion and Charity. A bill before the Indiana general assembly outlawing gambling and prescribing stiff penalties for violation is to be amended to exclude religious and fraternal groups in order to secure its passage. Representatives of certain church and fraternal groups protested the passage of the bill without such exemption would seriously curtail their incomes for religious and charitable purposes. Their efforts to defeat the bill were enthusiastically supported by holders of federal gambling permits, of which there are several hundred in the state. The attorney general said that the exemption clause makes the law of doubtful constitutionality. Perhaps that was the real purpose of the exemption clause.

J. A. C.

MEMO ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The Children's Bureau of the Federal Security Agency, concerned about the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency and the large number of children who, in the very near future will be coming into the 10-17 year age group, has asked the cooperation of local social welfare and social action committees in a nationwide program to combat juvenile delinquency and improve the care of children who come into conflict with the law.

Situation Serious

The gravity of the situation is demonstrated by the fact that the number of delinquents appearing before juvenile courts that reported to the Children's Bureau increased 19% between 1948 and 1951. This brings the estimated number of delinquent children that came before juvenile courts in this country in 1951 to 350,000. A much greater number, some 1,000,000 children, come to attention of the police each year for delinquent conduct. Census figures indicate that by 1960 there will be 45% more children between 10 and 17 than there were in 1950. This is the age range within which most juvenile delinquency cases fall. Even if the rate of juvenile offenses does not increase by the end of the decade, the number of children handled by law enforcement agencies can be expected to increase by 45%. Administrators of programs serving delinquents report that not only are they receiving more children but they are receiving an increasing number of children with severe personality disturbances whose treatment demands considerable individual attention.

Some Immediate Goals

The immediate goal of the Children's Bureau program is to achieve urgently needed improvement of certain specific services already devoted to the task of prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquents . . . At the same time there is need for strengthening and expanding the broad preventive measures that attack undesirable conditions and create advantageous conditions for the welfare of children. Particular attention must be paid to child welfare services, with their emphasis on meeting the needs of children in their own homes and on broad community planning.

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9. Eight churches participated in or sponsored interracial services involving mixed congregations.
10. Four banquets featuring interracial fellowship were sponsored by as many churches.
11. Two churches reported that their membership policy was interracial and one white church noted that it just happened to receive a Negro member on Feb. 8.

These facts are significant in that

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ning. Delinquency is an index of the effectiveness of services to children in general. When the incident of delinquency rises, it is evident that services to children are failing to keep pace with the needs of the time.

National health, welfare, education and civic organizations are being asked through their local constituents to work in local communities toward the goals of achieving:

1. Police procedures that, while still giving full protection to the public, provide for the constructive handling of children.
2. Suitable detention quarters for the child who cannot be allowed to stay in his own home while awaiting final disposition by the juvenile court.
3. Juvenile courts staffed and so organized that a skillful appraisal of factors behind a child's delinquency may be made and the child may be set on the road to good citizenship.
4. Training schools to receive only children who can best be served in group care and with the necessary plant, staff and community support to treat the delinquent child . . .

What You Can Do

1. Find out from your council of churches, local community welfare council, council of church women, or other local planning group about activities or surveys planned around juvenile delinquency. See how you can help.

2. Have informal conversations with the mayor, the chief of police, the juvenile court judge and other key officials as to what they are doing or plan to do in connection with this campaign.

3. Write to the U.S. Children's Bureau, Washington 25, D.C. for further information on facts and figures about juvenile delinquency, suggested local projects, and background material.

4. Plan local meetings to which interested and informed church people may be invited to discuss what is going on in your own communities.

5. Determine what are the most pressing problems in your community and with the cooperation of other interested groups, try to set in motion activities which help strengthen local services to children who come into conflict with the law.

6. Set specific priorities for action in any planning which you develop.

7. Consult your state planning body for children and youth, organized usually in connection with the follow-up of the White House Conference . . . These bodies have a great deal of information about needs in the delinquent field within the state.

At this time when we are facing a grave problem which affects a large number of our nation's children there is a unique opportunity for the churches to play a significant role in meeting this pressing social need.

From the February 1953
Bulletin of the Church
Conference of Social Work.

BISHOP OXNAM —

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for this attack and who she now believes endanger our educational freedom. She mentioned Senator McCarthy, Senator Jenner, and Congressman Velde.

"What happened? The chairman of the Committee on Un-American Activities, Mr. Velde, released a statement to the effect that Mrs. Meyer had written an article for *Soviet America* and, strangely enough, he gave as his source for that information the Communist paper, *Pravda*. When did *Pravda* become an authoritative source in the realm of truth? How long are we to tolerate former conspirators, men who admit they sought to overthrow this government and who by their own admission were traitors, now coming as respected witnesses with amazingly adaptable memories?

"It now appears that Mrs. Meyer never wrote the article. It was written by another person whose name was spelled differently. The chairman of the Committee apologizes in public. Would he have apologized to a . . . citizen who does not possess the great influence Mrs. Meyer possesses? I think not. Firing or suspending a clerk is no answer. The whole procedure must be re-examined. There isn't a man in this country who cannot be ruined overnight by the kind of procedure wherein a lie is released by a responsible committee and given wide publicity.

"I know something of this personally. This committee follows a practice that is incredible. Anyone can send a lie to the committee and it becomes a part of the committee files. Then, without investigating the lie, the committee will send out these lies on its official letterhead, and will do so over the signature of an official clerk. People receiving this information naturally assume it to be an opinion of the committee. In some letters it has been so stated.

"I was reported as having written an article on Stalin . . . the report on the official letterhead of the committee named the paper, the page, and the date. I bought the paper and found that the article had been written by someone else whose name could not possibly have been mistaken for mine. . . . I wrote the committee and received a reply from Mr. Wood, then chairman, as follows: 'That report was in error, I will freely admit, but I assure you that the error was not an attempt to misrepresent you.' I pressed the matter further and received another letter from Congressman Wood stating, 'At no time have we ever vouched for the correctness of any newspaper item.' . . . Mr. Wood also stated, 'The attached report does not express an opinion or a conclusion on the part of the committee.' What, then, is the reason for sending it out on the

official letterhead of the committee, signed by an official clerk? . . .

"There is a proper place for Congressional investigations. Great good has followed some of them. The primary purpose is to secure information necessary to legislation, not to give an occasional servant of the people a free ride to a position of power.

"I speak on this today with deep feeling, because I know that if the freedom of the university is denied, the next attempt will be to silence the pulpit. We wish to say to all who think in these terms that the freedom of our educational institutions, the freedom of our churches and their pulpits will be preserved, and we are prepared to meet this attack, whatever the cost"

Churchmen will do well to heed this timely warning from a bishop of the great Methodist Church, a former president of the Federal Council of Churches, and currently a vice president of the World Council of Churches. Freedom is not destroyed by a sudden assault but by hacking away at its foundations a little at a time. J. A. C.

NATIONAL COUNCIL —

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ods that are now bringing it into disrepute.

"At this moment when national unity based upon mutual confidence is of paramount importance to our security, men in responsible positions must not, through unsubstantiated charges and blanket indictments, destroy confidence in our American schools, colleges and universities. To do this would be to play into the hands of the Communists.

"There should be no encroachment upon the sound American pattern of local control of schools. National regimentation, whether of business, of labor, or religion, or of education, is abhorrent to Americans. No regimentation is more dangerous than that of the mind.

"The control of our educational institutions, in keeping with the American voluntary principle as opposed to statism, is not a function of Congressional committees, but is properly vested in boards of trustees and of education selected for that purpose. These boards must exercise the responsibility of dealing with the occasional subversive within their institutions.

"Because of these allied concerns, we authorized and request the president of this council to appoint a 'Committee on the Maintenance of American Freedom,' with instructions to watch developments which threaten the freedom of any of our people or their institutions, whether through denying the basic right of freedom of thought, through Communist infiltration, or wrong methods of meeting that infiltration. This committee is requested to make such recommendations to the General Board from time to time as the committee may deem appropriate."

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they give us a picture of the types of approaches being made by the churches of the Disciples. Certainly we have no reason to believe that only the eighty-seven churches which have reported so far participated in the recognition of Race Relations Sunday. Rather on the basis of experience with the tendency of people to ignore questionnaires, one would guess that for every church that reported there were a number of others which had observed the day but did not report.

Even more significant incidentally than the facts themselves are some of the comments which accompanied the reports of interracial and interfaith services. Here are some typical observations:

"This is the 4th time we have had a Negro in our pulpit and the members of the church appreciate their coming very much. Our attendance on these Sundays is always good." — (Missouri)

"Invited the First Baptist Church (Negro) to worship with us at the night service Feb. 8. There were 180 (church full) present. This was done by unanimous vote of our official board." — (Virginia)

"Service was well received in this very Southern town. Have been asked to do it more often." — (North Carolina)

"Our adult sponsors and our youth felt this was truly a high spot this year in our CYF" — (Tennessee)

"At the end of the services which were very reverent the congregation shook hands with the ones on the program and praised them for their part. We (the CYF and I) were afraid our attendance would drop off because of our daring move but instead it increased a third so we feel like real pioneers." — (Kentucky)

"We arranged for members of a Negro Church to participate in our worship services, church school and Sunday fellowship dinner. We had a special sermon by a Negro minister on Feb. 8. His subject was, 'Life is a Christian Vocation'." — (Illinois)

"The young people had a Negro minister and his wife at their evening service. He spoke and following his speech there was an open discussion. This was a very helpful program." — (Georgia)

"Just two Sundays ago we put our 'race relations' to practice and accepted a Negro lady into Christian fellowship by transfer of membership. It was a great experience for all of us." — (Michigan)

"This service was sponsored by the CYF with pastor in charge. It proved very successful." — (Idaho)

"This church has no racial barriers. Until recently we had two elderly men who were colored who were active members" — (Iowa)

"We discovered that our church is the only group in our city area that has extended the hand of fellowship to this Negro congregation. This was our second year to do so. I believe we all came away more enriched and touched with a deeper understanding of our colored brothers. For me, I know, it was an experience I'll never forget and hope we can repeat it again." — (Texas)